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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/656,325	09/08/2003	Masafumi Tanaka	249-313(AMK)	9203
23117 7590 02/20/2007 NIXON & VANDERHYE, PC 901 NORTH GLEBE ROAD, 11TH FLOOR ARLINGTON, VA 22203			EXAMINER DUONG, THANH P	
			ART UNIT 1764	PAPER NUMBER
SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE		MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE	
3 MONTHS		02/20/2007	PAPER	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/656,325

Applicant(s)

TANAKA ET AL.

Examiner

Tom P. Duong

Art Unit

1764

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 18 December 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Applicants' arguments and remarks filed on December 18, 2006 have been carefully considered. Claims 1-5 are pending in this application.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

1. Claims 1 and 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being by Japanese Patent Publication 09242533 (hereinafter JPN '533) or British Patent 1,473,219 (hereinafter BP '219).

JPN '533 discloses a holding material (11), for a catalytic converter (Figure 1) comprising a catalyst carrier (13), a casing (1) for receiving the catalyst carrier (13), and the holding material (11) mounted on the catalyst carrier (13) and interposed in a gap between the catalyst carrier and the casing (conical outer shell) wherein the holding material is made of inorganic fibers, and at least an area of exhaust-gas-inlet-side of the holding material is set to be smaller in basis weight than any other area of the holding material (Figure 1 and Abstract).

BP '219 discloses a holding material (4), for a catalytic converter (Fig. 2) comprising a catalyst carrier (5), a casing (1) for receiving the catalyst carrier (5), and

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the holding material (4) mounted on the catalyst carrier (5) and interposed in a gap between the catalyst carrier and the casing (conical shell) wherein the holding material is made of inorganic fibers, and at least an area of exhaust-gas-inlet-side of the holding material is set to be smaller in basis weight than any other area of the holding material (Figure 2 and page 1, lines 1-90).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 2 and 4-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over JPN '533 or BP '219. Regarding claims 2 and 4, JPN '533 discloses the features of the claimed invention but is silent with respect to the basis weight of a smaller basis weight area is set as basis weight of the other area is not smaller than 1.15. However, JPN '533 discloses the thermal-expansion mat is pressed into the conical-shaped outer housing 1 and the pressed-fit mat must provide adequate support to the ceramic support and prevent inlet exhaust gas to bypass around the ceramic support (Section 0015 and 0016) and it would have been obvious in view of JPN '533 to one having ordinary skill in the art to optimize the basis weight area at other section greater than the basis weight area of the inlet section at most thru routine optimization (*In re Boesch*,

617 F.2d. 272, 205 USPQ 215 (CCPA 1980), and since it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art. (*In re Allen* 105 USPQ 233).

Regarding claim 5, JPN '533 discloses the structure of the claimed invention and it appears that JPN '533 disclose the ratio, in axial length, of a smaller basis weight area to the other area is in a range of from 1:9 to 9:1 depending on the design requirement for the carrier support length. In addition, JPN '533 shows the carrier support with sufficient ratio, in axial length, of a smaller basis area to the other area, and the carrier support of JPN '533 have sufficient axial length which is deemed to be obvious over the broad range of the claimed invention.

The same comments applied to BP '219.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-5 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Tom P. Duong whose telephone number is (571) 272-2794. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00AM - 4:30PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Glenn Caldarola can be reached on (571) 272-1444. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Tom Duong
February 12, 2007

TD



Glenn Caldarola
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Technology Center 1700